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THE ART OF MAKING
CATALOGUES OF LIBRARIES

[Andrea Crestadoro]

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Crestadoro, Andrea



THE ART OF MAKING

CATALOGUES
OF
LIBRARIES;

OR,

A METHOD TO OBTAIN IN A SHORT TIME A MOST
PERFECT, COMPLETE, AND SATISFACTORY

Printed Catalogue

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OF THE

BRITISH MUSEUM LIBRARY.

BY

A READER THEREIN.

LONDON:

Published and Sold by

THE LITERARY, SCIENTIFIC & ARTISTIC REFERENCE OFFICE,

No. 10, Brownlow Street, Holborn.

1856.

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P R E F A C E.

The age in which we live is distinguished by vigorous and successful cultivation of the Arts, Literature, and Science. In every civilized country, men illustrious for talent, worth, and learning, are earnestly engaged in enlarging the boundaries of knowledge. But unfortunately, the vast and daily increasing results of their labour remain hidden and thus are of little or no service, from the want of some ready means of reference to them.

Several years have now elapsed since the complaints of the Public on the necessity of a Printed Catalogue of the British Museum Library aroused the attention of Parliament. Voluminous evidence was then taken; and all the witnesses that were examined, much as they differed in other points, were generally agreed as to the unlimited benefits that would result from a good Printed Catalogue. The sums so liberally voted year by year are a convincing proof that money is not wanting. Yet it has been concluded that grave impediments exist in the way of accomplishing this object.

On the Continent the same difficulty has been experienced, for there, it appears, Printed Catalogues of the large Libraries are either not extant, or, if commenced, have not been completed. For instance, the Imperial Library at Paris, consisting, it is said, of above 1,000,000 Printed Works and 100,000 MSS., has not a complete Catalogue although the Librarians have been engaged on one for more than a century.

At present the British Museum Library numbering some 800,000 volumes, after some 20 years of cataloguing at a cost that in 1853 amounted already to 100,000*l*. (vide Parliamentary Debates), has not yet published any such necessary auxiliary for the service of British intellect.

It is worthy of remark and also highly creditable to the Trustees of the British Museum, that they first originated and have persevered the longest in the desire of printing a Catalogue as indispensable for turning to proper account the treasures of the Library. When they desisted from urging that end, it was not from an insensibility to its advantages, but only from the pressure of the objections, and the adverse opinions of the Commission appointed to inquire respecting the Museum.

It is stated that the manuscript Catalogue, which is accessible to the frequenters of the Reading-room, if it is not satisfactory, is the best of all existing Catalogues; and that if the idea of its being improved and printed is all but abandoned, it is in consequence of the intrinsic difficulties which have been found to surround the formation of Catalogues of large Libraries.

The present Essay inquires what these difficulties are with a view to solve the problem of their removal. It will be a source of great satisfaction to the writer if the result of his labours shall be to further the accomplishment of the greatest boon that can be conferred on Literature—a really successful Printed Catalogue of its invaluable treasures.

LONDON :

May, 1856.

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THE ART OF Making Catalogues of Libraries.

MISTAKEN IDEA OF CATALOGUE.

IF we consider how often human progress has been retarded through assumed propositions being adopted as mathematical axioms without their truth having been tested, surprise can hardly be felt that the idea of cataloguing a library should have been so traditionally associated with the notion of an alphabetical, or indeed any particular arrangement, as to take it for granted, without inquiry, that the two are necessarily inseparable. Indexes to Catalogues seem to have been for some time past proposed and even carried out to a certain extent, yet the alphabetical arrangement has been persevered in with regard to them, as if no reason existed for appending an Index.

CATALOGUE AND INDEX.

It is evident that in a Library two kinds of lists are required. We may just adopt the received appellation, and call one the CATALOGUE, and the other its INDEX, provided we mistake not their functions, which are essentially distinct, both as regards their arrangement and their ultimate purpose.

A Catalogue is a list; an Index is also a list. In this respect they are both identical. But the first is a list of the goods; its direct object is to make an inventory of the property by recording a full and exact description of each and every article. The second is but a table of the contents of the first, a hand to show the way how readily to find any of the articles as actually entered in the inventory. The first needs no particular arrangement, beyond the most common process of merely ticketing for future reference each article with a progressive number, from one to two millions if there happen to be as many articles. The other is essentially alphabetical in its arrangement. The first must enter as full and as strict an account of every article, individually, as will identify it at once and prevent mistaking it for any that might happen to be like it. The second needs only to refer to its inventorial number. By the one you are actually placed in the presence of the very object you seek, as far as its full description is concerned; by the other you are given its address. This distinction between the two should never be forgotten. Not but that the two lists may be combined. Such combination is possible in all cases when the article in each inventorial entry is of a nature so far uncompounded and undivided that it contains only one matter for reference. In this case the Catalogue may conveniently become its own Index by being at the same time a list and an alphabetical one, as in the instance of Catalogues called Dictionaries, where the object is merely to make an inventory of all the words of a language. But when the article to be inventoried is in itself an assemblage of many different matters, each of which requires a distinct reference, the combination of the two lists becomes an impossibility. The Catalogue has no claim to be alphabetical, and its Index has no right to be exclusive, but it must embrace all sorts of reference, no matter how many or how various they may appear. The two lists cannot exchange offices, nor intrude into each other's domain with impunity; nor can either of them, without mischief, escape performing any of the duties naturally belonging to it. If such a thing as an Index is appended to the Catalogue of a Library, why should it not be a table of ALL instead of SOME only of the contents of the Catalogue?

And if the Index undertakes, as it ought to do, ALL kinds of references that may be required, both as regards subjects and names whether of authors or otherwise, where is the utility of the Catalogue being alphabetical? what necessitates the Catalogue to step out of its natural way on to a bed of Procuste, in order to undertake what does not belong to it and is utterly inconsistent with the proper performance of its own duty?

OF THE ENTRY IN THE CATALOGUE.

As the first page of a book generally contains or is expected to contain its title, place, and date of publication, Librarians have agreed that these, in addition to the size and number of volumes, should constitute the essentials for determining the entry of a book in the Catalogue. But the Index, whenever appended to the Catalogue, has not been deemed entitled to the same privilege. On a closer examination this will be found a mistaken arrangement.

OF THE ENTRY IN THE INDEX.

For all useful purposes the title, place, date, size and number of volumes should be entered in the Index as well as in the Catalogue; the entry however to be made in each of them respectively in a far different way, as their purposes are quite dissimilar. Of course as regards the last four of these elements, there can be no difference, as they consist of one single name and mere figures that cannot be altered and which take up but an insignificant space in the entry. The only difference rests with the title.

WHAT IS A TITLE?

Practically the title is assumed to contain the subject and name of the writer, whether author or otherwise. It is obvious that both Catalogue and Index must enter subjects and names, but with a different view. The Index for the purpose of finding; the Catalogue for the purpose of inventory. It follows that the latter must give sub-

jects and names at full length as they actually stand on the title-page of the book itself. It being the only object of this entry to furnish an exact description of the article, nothing short of a complete and correct transcript of the title-page can satisfy this end.

HOW A BOOK IS TO BE ENTERED.

A question has been raised—a very *questio vexata*—which has done an incredible amount of mischief, how a book is to be entered, and which should be the first word of the entry. This question entirely disappears in a Catalogue that is not, and ought not to be, alphabetical, and where, as on the plan of cataloguing Manuscripts, all that is required, is simply a progressive numeration for reference. Neither can the same question arise with regard to the alphabetical Index. In the inventorial Catalogue no article requires to be entered more than once so long as it is identically the same. The Index must enter it under as many headings as there are words in the inventorial entry that require reference both as regards subjects and names. A question may arise, not how a book should be entered in the Index, but which of the words of the inventorial entry ought to be indexed and which not. To illustrate this, let the following entry be supposed transcribed from the title-page of a work in the inventorial Catalogue of a Library, with the progressive number, say 900,000, affixed to it.

900,000 "Lectures on Architecture and Painting, delivered at Edinburgh, in November 1853, by John Ruskin, Author of 'The Stones of Venice,' 'Seven Lamps of Architecture,' 'Modern Painters,' &c., with Illustrations drawn by the Author. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 5, Cornhill, 1854," 8vo.

In this inventorial entry the question being put which words require reference, that is, which are to be indexed with regard to name and subject or subjects, the answer can hardly give rise to discussion. It is obvious that the three words "Architecture," "Painting," and "Ruskin," supply as many different headings for as many entries of the same book in the alphabetical Index, as follows:

"Architecture and Painting, Lectures, J. Ruskin, 8vo. London, 1854. 900,000."

"Painting and Architecture, Lectures, J. Ruskin, 8vo. London, 1854. 900,000."

"Ruskin, J., Architecture and Painting, Lectures, 8vo. London, 1854. 900,000."

Only it may be asked whether the word "Lectures" should also be indexed or not? In point of fact, this is not a question how the book is to be entered, but it resolves itself into the general question, independently from this particular book,—Whether it is convenient that a list of all Lectures should be made out? If this question be decided affirmatively, then, the word "Lectures," as it stands in the inventorial entry, will form a fourth heading under which the same book is indexed in the same manner, as follows:—

"Lectures. Architecture and Painting, J. Ruskin, 8vo., London, 1854. 900,000."

This decision being of course carried out with regard to every book that contains the same indication, the result will be that the general Index will exhibit under this heading a list of all the Lectures in the Library on every subject.

Here let it be observed how much less space is taken up by the entry of the same book four times in the Index than there is by one single entry in the Catalogue. This is a necessary consequence of the different purposes for which the two lists are intended. The object of the first is to give only what is necessary to identify a name or a subject, not a book; whilst the real business of the second is to discriminate the book itself, not only from books on a different subject and by different authors, but from other editions and even copies of the same book. Therefore it cannot avoid giving a full description of the same by its own title-page being transcribed, and furthermore giving, when necessary, such additional remarks as the case may require. But, in the Index, the entries are in every case necessarily very succinct, whilst, at the same time, they contain all the elements usually required to enable persons to find at once and single out the books they want. If a fuller description is required than appears in the Index, then by referring to the address, so to speak, of the book in the Catalogue, the transcript of the whole title-page is found, accompanied by any

bibliographical information the Librarian has deemed it necessary to add.

THE CATALOGUE AS AN INVENTORY.

But to arrive at this general and practical usefulness, which an Index on this liberal scale can alone supply, it is necessary to know what the Library precisely contains by an inventory. And an inventory cannot be successful unless it is both full and free from all alphabetical bonds. That transcribing the titles from the title-page of each work is the best mode of securing fullness has been proved over and over again. Nothing is so certain and satisfactory, to a person who wishes to identify a particular book as a full title; and it not unfrequently happens that it is found unnecessary to purchase or borrow a book by finding an ample title-page which shows that what is sought for is not to be found in *that* volume. The necessity of this rule is founded upon the important difference that exists between identifying a particular book and a particular subject or name—the whole difference between a catalogue-inventory and a catalogue-index.

IMPORTANCE OF A FULL TRANSCRIPT OF THE TITLE-PAGE IN THE CATALOGUE.

On a title-page there may be statements that are unnecessary to define the subject or name, but none to define the book. The most apparently idle words, and even the errors of title-pages are most, and sometimes the only important ones for this purpose. Cataloguers may comment upon, but never should alter, what it has been deemed right to state on the title-page of a book by those who have framed it. With much reason it has been remarked that, if a Catalogue shortens, paraphrases, or otherwise alters titles, it is impossible to trust it as giving that true information which a searcher wants or a writer desires to convey, and that by trusting Catalogues with short titles either duplicates are bought by collectors, or works supposed to exist which never were written. The suppression of words always involves more or less matter for the exercise of discretion or opinion, in which no two persons

agree. One cannot say he is safe in omitting, for instance, in the entry of Archimedes' works, the words "*Philosophus ac Geometra præstantissimus*," as superfluous. The persons, who know best what they are looking for, are those who require the most precise and accurate information; and the very words omitted may be those that are requisite to distinguish the book they are in search of. The most obscure books are not exempt from this rule; as every one knows that obscure names and obscure books need more Catalogue information than illustrious ones. Professor De Morgan has given many remarkable instances of the evil arising from dealing with titles, and has clearly established that especially the Catalogue of a national Library such as that of the British Museum ought, with respect to its information to be so accurate and valuable as to induce those who have researches to make, to visit it from afar on the strength of its statements; and that the many scarce or valuable books, would draw both historians and literary and scientific men to London, from all quarters of the world, if the inventorial statements were generally authoritative. If the titles are not fully transcribed they become so far fictitious; they must be looked upon with suspicion even on points which cannot be directly shown to be inaccurate. In point of fact, it is just the same as if the original frontispiece were torn to pieces and a spurious one substituted, or a fraud perpetrated by reprinting the work. A person who consults the Catalogue of a Library has a right to the exercise of his own judgement, and the Librarian is bound to touch none of the words of the titles, but he may append to them such comments as he thinks proper. There are, of course, a few remarkable instances of great prolixity. Some works have title-pages as long as a chapter, others have mottoes and similar adjuncts by which one would think the frontispiece uselessly overloaded. Some German books have even so many as three and four title-pages. But as an abundant compensation, an immense number of other books have very short titles; and the great importance attached to the best and safest information cannot be sacrificed to a paltry economy of a few pages in a volume of the Catalogue.

IMPEDIMENTS TO PRINTING THE CATALOGUE CONSIDERED.

The next thing in importance to full titles is the printing of Catalogues. Here the great hinderance which lies at the threshold of this long disputed point is in the alphabetical arrangement forced upon Catalogues. The general cry for a printed Catalogue of the British Museum Library is met by the answer, that no printed Catalogue would convey a knowledge of what the Museum contains to the public;—that there is a physical impossibility to the existence of a complete Catalogue of a Library which is increasing at the rate of some 20,000 volumes per annum;—that no Catalogue can be sent to press until the whole of the titles are written and alphabetically arranged; and that long before the Catalogue can be finished, a supplement would be required almost as lengthy as the Catalogue itself,—this soon to be followed by a third, the third by a fourth, and so on. Such are the difficulties which exist in connection with the Catalogue through the mischievous influence of the word *Alphabetical* and which neither rules, nor ability, nor zeal can counterbalance or overcome.

A good Catalogue would be a list of all that exists in the Library, not as a matter of arrangement, but as a matter of inventory vouching for the existence of the books in the Library. If this be followed, as it ought to be, by an Index for every finding purpose, the Catalogue might and ought to be printed as fast as the title-pages could be transcribed. Any portion when printed is by itself permanently complete. Every additional list of new accessions is no supplement at all, but only the next volume of a work in progress, itself never to grow obsolete by the addition of any subsequent volume. As the entry is bound to no particular heading, except a progressive number, the whole process becomes a mere mechanical one requiring no exercise of judgment. Let such an inventory of the British Museum Library be printed at once, and very soon Literature and Science would voluntarily set themselves at work on it by publishing first such bibliographical commentaries on each title in the inventory as the books require, next indexing all useful

matters to answer every finding purpose in all branches of human knowledge and industry. It has been stated that printed Catalogues of Libraries have not sold. This only proves that they have been so framed as to be of little or no service. A printed copy of the title-page merely of every book in the British Museum Library would be so great a boon, that even in the temporary absence of a suitable Index it would enable any person in London, in the country, or abroad, to go over the titles, either himself or by hired clerks, and pick out the knowledge of what might be of use to him in the Library. In reality it is just the same as though the whole Library were thrown open and full permission given to the public to help themselves to every shelf and to every volume as far as the frontispiece goes. There is no doubt that Literature is greatly suffering from the want of printed Catalogues of its intellectual treasures; and its usefulness will be but very limited until this be done. No improvement of any great amount can be hoped for, except upon the condition of an inventorial unalphabetical Catalogue being printed. The public justly complain that they do not know what works are in the Museum: and no useful bibliographical commentaries nor Indexes can be obtained to supply this want until inventories are printed.

THE CATALOGUE AS A MEANS OF RECORDING BEQUESTS.

There is another very important advantage attached to unalphabetical inventories which must be noticed. Almost all those who have bequeathed Libraries to the public have wished them to be kept separate. It is natural enough that in the absence of a better means of showing gratitude to these public benefactors, this just wish should be construed as an absolute objection to having the books mixed on shelves to suit their scientific arrangement with other books. But what else could be the object of the donors, than to make known the description of books they bequeathed? This end is best fulfilled by the books being separately entered in the printed inventory as a distinct collection under the donor's name. The public are bound to erect to the memory of the benefactors from whom the books came, a literary monument far more noble, universal,

and lasting than the mere arrangement of them upon shelves. The collection they bequeathed may be totally or partially destroyed by the injuries of fire or time, but its place in the printed inventory will continue for ever telling to the whole world both the benefit and the gratitude. Moreover, the purpose that it might serve, as an inducement to those possessing large and valuable Libraries so to dispose of them as to form national collections, if they were always kept separate and distinct, would be fully accomplished by means of a printed inventory. Even from foreign countries gifts would flow in. It has been observed that in Belgium the inclination has very much increased to bestow donations on public Libraries, since the wholesome precaution has been taken of having the names of such donors publicly printed. Many persons would be induced to contribute books that would fill *lacunæ* in public Libraries if inventorial Catalogues were made a matter of public interest and their names recorded.

PRINCIPLES THAT OUGHT TO REGULATE THE FORMATION OF THE INDEX.

A full transcript of the title-pages of every work in a Library having been obtained, the necessary bibliographical notices should be added and the whole most carefully indexed. Previous to our entering on the bibliographical question, it will be convenient to elucidate the principles that ought to regulate the Index.

The eminent gentleman who has been just raised to the well deserved office of Principal Librarian in the British Museum has acknowledged that when a full, accurate, and complete Catalogue of a Library is finished, we shall be able to make use of the titles in the manner that is most conducive to the advancement of science and learning; that then any person would have only to go over the titles and pick out whatever might require reference, and form an Index *locupletissimus*.

If the titles so to be indexed be those of the books themselves; if they be accompanied by such bibliographical observations as may be necessary; if names as well as subjects be indexed; and if the entries be

made to contain all the essential particulars usually required in cataloguing books, namely: the date, the imprint, the size, no less than the title;—then in this principle lies the whole art of a successful system of Catalogue. According to such a plan each entry in the Index is, in fact, the entry of the work as it appears in the inventory; the only difference being, that in the former it is in an abridged form and in an alphabetical order. Here it is important to notice that this abridgment is dictated. It is a necessary consequence of the very object of that entry and by no means a matter of arbitrary discretion, as is the case in the usual system of alphabetical Catalogues. For instance in the entry, "Architecture and Painting, Lectures, J. Ruskin," &c., the terms "*and Painting, Lectures,*" if the entry be considered in an absolute sense, are superfluous. They contain two different headings which are to be found in other places of the Index respectively. As such, they may be said to have no business here, because the object of the entry in this place is the word "*Architecture*" and no other. It is only as a sub-index that they are admissible; for, as the word "*Architecture*" is picked out, it may form so long a list of entries under the same heading as to fill several volumes of the Catalogue-Index, bringing together all works on this subject in all its varieties:—*Architecture* in general; *Architecture Gothic*; *Architecture Ecclesiastical*; *Architecture of Italy*; *Architecture and Sculpture*; *Architecture, Styles*; &c. On this consideration a sub-indexing becomes desirable; and by only admitting from the inventorial entry into that of the Index, a second and a third word after the word *Architecture*, merely according to their grammatical government, the immense mass of matters in a primary division, becomes at once self-distributed into its subordinate branches in their sub-alphabetical arrangement. The introduction of every additional word would further expand in the well-known unlimited progression the sub-classifying power which single words admit of as respects the order in which they succeed one another when placed side by side. It is then in the nature of the Index to admit of a very simple and easy abbreviation of the titles; whilst, on the contrary, it is in the nature of the inventorial Catalogue not

to shorten at all,—a difference which is due, as we have seen, to the different purposes for which they are respectively intended. The inventorial Catalogue must identify the book, not only amongst all the books in the Library, but amongst all existing books;—the object of the Index is only to discriminate one heading from its adjacent. It follows that it may be safely assumed that in no case will the entry in the Index trespass out of the space of a single line without being uselessly expanded; whilst the inventorial entry cannot suppress a single word or letter of the title-page, however prolixious it may be, without causing mischief. In the inventory a book is entered only once;—in the Index as many times as there are words in the inventorial entry, that require reference. It may however, be observed that, as the heading refers not to the book, but to a word in its title-page, in point of fact, there is no article twice entered in the Index. A work entitled “A Book of Beasts, Birds, Flowers, Fruits, Flies, and Worms, exactly drawn, &c.,” would be entered six times but in truth it is not so. These are six entries, each of a different book so far as the subject is concerned. A person that requires works on “Fruits,” and on no other subject, will examine that part of the book only where this topic is treated. So far the six different subjects are just like so many distinct pamphlets or works bound in one volume. The same remark applies to names.

THE INDEX AS A FINDING CATALOGUE.

After an inventorial Catalogue, the Index may be extended so that it shall embrace subjects and names of every description, and, as it were, search the Library in every corner, bring to light every hidden treasure, and answer every useful inquiry.

How can an alphabetical Catalogue on the existing plan of joint inventory and index, or one entry and one heading, satisfy inquirers that seek the same book from different data, and for different purposes? How can even the best answer to any one inquiry, be a suitable reply to all those that may ask a different question? But if the alphabetical arrangement or finding purpose, and the inventory be separate and distinct, the former will then be

found capable of answering every possible question, and the latter, of giving the fullest information. Freedom is, in all things, an essential condition of growth and power. The purposes of readers in search of a book are as manifold as the names and subjects, or headings under which the book may be traced. Entering the book only once is giving but one of its many references and suppressing the remainder;—it is serving the purpose of one reader and defeating that of others. So far the book is withdrawn from the public, its light is extinguished and destroyed. Many persons do not go to Libraries to look for authors or writers, but to study subjects, and with whom the sole question is what books there are on the topic of their researches. Others are writing about literary men, and are anxious to examine all books associated with the name of their heroes, although they be mere translations, compilations, annotations, illustrations, engravings, revisions, editions and the like. On the same principle some will search for all books that have been printed by the same typographer, or put forth by the same publisher. Others will seek for all such as were issued before a certain date, with a view of ascertaining what books may be considered scarce or rare, or of discovering the first process of printing. When inventorial entries, relieved from all alphabetical shackles are printed, and all title-pages thus brought before the eye of the public, every kind of index is rendered possible and will no doubt be undertaken.

We have seen that on this plan it is a peculiarity of the Index, that although its entries contain all the essentials usually required for cataloguing books, yet they are comprised in a very limited number of words. It is necessary, in addition, to remark that neither the selection nor limitation, nor arrangement of these words is a matter of that arbitrary nature to which cataloguing on the existing system is liable, but is guided entirely by very simple and never-failing rules. Assuming that the title-page is faithfully transcribed and all its *lacunæ*, if any, properly supplied, this will form the inventorial entry consisting, if not always, in most cases, of two distinct parts, namely the title-page of the book, and the necessary bibliographical additions. Both of these must be embraced by the Index so far as they contain words that require

reference; and—what is of the utmost importance, each entry in the Index must be in the identical words of the inventory. Any alteration may both misreport the book and defeat the ends of inquirers; for, no reference can be legitimate unless it follows out the author's own definition of his book nor authoritative as to supplied *desiderata* unless it is given in the Librarian's or Bibliographer's own words.

• THE INDEX AS A CLASSIFIED CATALOGUE.

Whenever an opinion has been expressed that a useful Catalogue is wanted, it has been followed by a dispute on the question respecting classed and alphabetical Catalogues. If these words be considered in abstract they present no difference. A classed Catalogue is alphabetical also, and an alphabetical Catalogue is classified, at least, as to the class-authors. But the true subject of the dispute lies between the aim of those who want a succinct Catalogue to enable them to find the books whether as to subjects or names, and that of those who attach a greater importance to a full general Catalogue that should enable them to identify any book. This contest between a general full Catalogue and a finding or working Catalogue, as it has been expressively styled, can only be successfully settled by doing full justice to both claims at the expense of neither;—that is by means of an inventory and a general Index to its words. Making an alphabetical Index is converting the whole inventory into a general finding Catalogue, and preparing, moreover, all sorts of classifications. This is forming an encyclopaedical concordance to the title-pages, and superseding all classified arrangements. In classified Catalogues the plan has hitherto been to divide and sub-divide into different classes all the objects of our knowledge; but the learned are not yet agreed with respect to the proper order of these different classes, or in fixing the rank which the primary divisions ought to hold, and referring to each of them the daily increasing number of their branches. All such classifications, however scientific they may be, are artificial and cannot answer the practical purpose of so indexing books as to assist successfully in any particular research. A general Index to the title-pages being founded

on no preconcerted classifications, includes ALL classifications ever contrived or to be invented; it admits of the immense variety of topics which knowledge itself embraces and reason or fancy may suggest. It refunds into a single alphabetical arrangement, what classified Catalogues separate into many. The searcher for a book has to make no scientific effort in order to discover under what branch he must look for it. To him a general Index is a ready self-classified Catalogue,—an encyclopædia with prepared answers to any question on all subjects and names.

We may distinguish, as to the Index, two sorts of entries, which may be called FULL ENTRIES and SHORT ENTRIES. The first to contain the five elements usually required in cataloguing books, viz., subject, name, date, place, and size; which FULL ENTRIES are however, as we have seen, always satisfied with a very limited number of words. The second,—SHORT ENTRIES to consist of the sole heading. Their purpose is the following.—When the whole Index is prepared, all the entries being full entries, we find, for instance, that all books in the Library professing to be Bibles or on the Bible are brought together under this heading. If we now go over the whole Index so prepared and select all such headings as are synonyms of *Bible*, or of a like class, we obtain a list of headings such as *Scripture; Testament; Genesis; Gospels; Revelation, Book of; Types; &c.*, every one of which after the same manner as the heading *Bible*, brings together all books in the Library that are, or profess to be, on those topics respectively. Let this list of headings, then, be appended, as a mere list of headings of a like class, under the most comprehensive of all of them, and let all the other headings of this same class refer to it in their turn. Thus, if the heading *Scripture* be selected as the most comprehensive, the searcher will find under this heading a number of short entries and a number of full ones; the first being a mere list of headings of a like class as are to be found in the Index as above illustrated; the other being the full entries of all books in the Library bearing on that topic according to the statement in the title-page. In the like manner, he will find under all the other headings of this same class, first, a reference to the class-list as

displayed under *Scripture*, and next, the full entries on the individual respective topics.

The same process should be applied to names; all of which it is evident ought to be indexed in precisely the same manner as subjects. If, for instance, works have been published under three different names, as *Gower*; *Egerton*; and *Ellesmere*; all belonging to the same author, it would be wrong to enter any of them otherwise than as they appear. Let each name, as it becomes a heading in the Index, commence by a short entry of all the other names belonging to the same writer, and then let a full entry of the works that actually bear that name follow after. This plan being adopted, no question can arise as to whether a writer's name is to be entered as Thrall or Piozzi; Arouet or Voltaire; Pindar or Walcott; Piccolomini, or Æneas Sylvius, or Pius II. Each book is entered under such name as appears upon the title-page, or is supplied by the Librarian, and all claims are satisfied by a list of all the other names that belong or are considered to belong to the same writer, being recorded or referred to under each of them.

All our ideas are represented and conveyed through words, and it is of the greatest concernment to the success of a Catalogue, how, in reporting books, it deals with the words by which the books themselves are designated through their title-pages. The heading *Academy*, for instance, cannot, without all accepted notions being thrown into confusion, embrace those which on the title-pages are not styled *Academy*, but *Society*; *Association*; *Institute*; *Club*; *Company*; *University*; and the like. No entry can be correct or legitimate, and consequently successful, unless it is under its own original wording. All other possible purposes may be fully attained by a list of headings of a like class as are actually found in the Index being appended or referred to wherever it is desirable. This simple process alone will produce such a comprehensive and perfect system of classification that it will exclude no branch of human knowledge. Indeed, every heading may have its own class-list, which will be longer or shorter as in proportion it holds a primary, secondary, or still more subordinate place amongst those branches. Thus the word *Medicine*, will collect as appertinent to

this science, a greater number of headings than the word *Midwifery*, amongst which, the word *Midwifery* itself, will occur. In its turn this last word will be attended by comparatively a much shorter class-list, as *Abortion*; *Accoucheur*; *Child-birth*; *Labour*; *Parturition*; *Placenta*; *Hæmorrhage*; *Post-partum*; *Obstetric*; &c., and such like topics belonging to this special class. These lists will not contain all the possible headings that belong to the classes they represent, but only such as actually exist in the Index, so far as there are in the Library works on the subjects to which they refer. For instance, though *Cholera* be a medical subject, if there exists in the Library no work on *Cholera*, this heading will be absent from the class-lists, thereby, showing what works are still wanting in the Library.

In conclusion we may consider the general principles that should regulate the formation of the Index to be as follows. Every heading is capable of receiving entries of two distinct sorts,—the result of two simple operations, or rather the same operation repeated, that is, an Index to the words of the inventory, and then an Index to the Index itself. The first gives the full entries, the second the short ones, or class-lists. The result of the former is a general alphabetical finding Catalogue; of the latter a complete classification of all the contents of the Library.

It may appear at first paradoxical to affirm, that by the formation of class-lists being carried out to their utmost extent, the Index will be diminished considerably in bulk from that into which it would actually swell, if no such class-lists were formed. A person that searches the heading *Midwifery*, in order to study this special subject, will expect that the finding Catalogue should give him information of any treatise on *Parturition*, of the existence of which he is not aware. In its turn, a person, who knows that such a work so entitled exists, goes straight to look for it under this heading, expecting to find it there. The Catalogue must, therefore, give two full entries of the same work under two different headings, unless it follows out the plan of class-lists and accomplishes the same end by giving one entry full and one short.

CROSS-REFERENCES AS A MEANS OF SPECIAL CLASSIFICATION.

It is remarkable how often the greatest advantages are the result, not of any new suggestion, but of the right application of some principle already in practice. The formation of class-lists, in other words, of an Index to an Index is only the same thing as the system of cross-references when developed to the full extent of which it is capable. It would be endless to run here through all their varieties. It is sufficient to remark how simple and easy is the principle that presides over their formation. Since all our knowledge—how wide and large soever it grows—is founded upon our conceptions and ideas, it will ever be all embraced by, and conformable to, the simple laws according to which those ideas are formed, and to which every well-informed mind possesses a key. First of all, let every heading in the Index, whatever it may be, have its own class-lists to its fullest extent, selected for it from amongst the whole number of headings that compose the Index. Let this rule, as applied to one, be universally and impartially carried out, with regard to each and all of them, though their name be legion. An universal classification on this liberal scale, and no other can keep pace with the continuous march of Literature, Science, and Art, in which new objects and new ideas are daily arising to augment the store of human knowledge, and give birth to new words, new classes, and new groups. As the collector takes one heading at a time and goes over the whole number of headings in the Index, in order to discover and select those that belong to the same class, it is obvious that synonyms will first occur. This applies, as we have already observed, both to names and to subjects. The full entry of all works, for instance, on *Christ*, must be accompanied by such a list of other headings in the same Index, as will enable the searcher to consult, if required, what works exist in the Library on *Our Lord*; on *Jesus*; on *Our Saviour*; on the *Redeemer*; the *Messiah*; the *Deliverer*; &c. Also, a reader who seeks a work which he knows is entitled the *Deliverer*, should not be disappointed if he searches under the book's own title, and, besides, he ought to have the same advantage by being referred to the same list of synonymous headings.

Many different names are put on the same thing by various people and the mind is ever ready to let many of them slip, if not assisted. If a Catalogue were to throw all these different names into one more or less systematic, according to the classifying system hitherto followed, it would be more like disarranging than arranging things. The searcher does not want to be told that works on *Jesus* are religious books, or Divinity books, nor does he require the Librarian, or any one else, to inform him that a certain work on the *Redeemer* is a work on Jesus Christ. But he will greatly appreciate the finding recorded the heading *Redeemer*, under that of *Jesus*; for, by this, the Librarian does not say that such a work is a work on Jesus, but that there exists in the Library works bearing that synonymous title. So far, the Librarian has done what everybody could and would have done quite as well. But it is the business of a Librarian to save other people the trouble of doing it repeatedly for themselves, by doing it himself once for all.

The next and last step in the formation, of class-lists is to consider each heading as a subject, and to collect from the whole number of headings that compose the Index all those that have any similarity with it. Now, this is much the same as collecting all headings that are synonymous between themselves; the only difference being that which intervenes between a whole and a part. If *Oratory* be considered as a synonym with *Rhetoric*; *Tropology* is a synonym of a *part of Rhetoric*. A heading, when regarded not as a mere word, but as the conception which it is designed to signify, it may contain any number of ideas made up into a complex one. It follows that words or expressions conveying the same WHOLE collection of ideas will be TOTALLY synonymous between themselves;—and that they will be PARTIALLY so, with regard to the WHOLE when conveying only a portion of such collection. All words, as representatives of ideas, are PARTS of knowledge and all PARTS have reference to some WHOLE; and there is an old distinction which logical writers make of a whole and its parts into four several kinds that embrace all human knowledge. Whence it happens that, in point of fact, a class-list appended to a heading, is a list of words either TOTALLY or PARTIALLY synonymous with it.

Therein lies the secret of classifying aright and successfully aiding the searcher in ascertaining the exact extent of the treasures which the Library keeps at his disposal on any branch of knowledge whatever. A mere Index to the Index, methodises the whole contents of a Library with an accuracy and comprehensiveness to which nothing can be equal, except the simplicity of its design, and the facility of its execution.

The gathering into the most comprehensive groups is as essential to an orderly and satisfactory arrangement of things, as the separation of the parts to their most indefinite extent. According to the usual plan, human knowledge is variously divided into a limited number of artificial classes. The Index to the title-pages separates it into as many branches as there are headings brought into the Index from the immense variety of books on Nature and Art, on Divine affairs, on Creation and Providence, on Artifices, Schemes, Contrivances, and Practices of Mankind, whether in natural, civil or sacred concerns. There is no class however newly discovered, nor question however special, that is not fully answered, if an answer exists at all in any book of the whole Library. So much for an Index to the titles. Now, the Index to the Index by a similar process, but with a reversed end, collects all the single parts however multifarious be their number, and, like a Cosmos from a Chaos, by putting them together according as they are akin to each other or disagree, selects and ranges them into as many groups, if necessary, as there are headings in the index; each heading obtaining as long a list as it can seize within its own grasp, whether it be so comprehensive as to claim whole volumes of classes or only a few words. Thus for instance the heading *Agriculture*, will have a class-list composed of such topics as the following, if any special works on them are really entered in the Index:

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Animals, their diseases.</i> | <i>Cattle.</i> |
| <i>Aviary.</i> | <i>Cow-keeper.</i> |
| <i>Bees.</i> | <i>Cow Milk.</i> |
| <i>Blood-letting in Animals.</i> | <i>Crop.</i> |
| <i>Breeding.</i> | <i>Dairy.</i> |
| <i>Calving.</i> | <i>Drainage.</i> |

Embankment.
Farm.
Farming.
Farrier.
Fertiliser.
Flax Grower.
Forest Planter.
Fowls.
Fruit Cultivator.
Gardening.
Grape.
Grasses.
Grazier.
Green-house.
Guano.
Harvest.
Herd.
Hive.
Hop Planter.
Horticulture.
Hot-house.
Husbandry.
Irrigation.
Labourer.

Lambing.
Lawns.
Live Stock.
Manure.
Milk.
Muck.
Oak Cultivation.
Pasture.
Pig.
Pigeons.
Pine-apple Growing.
Ploughing.
Pomology.
Poultry.
Pruner.
Stable.
Stud.
Turnip.
Tree-lifter.
Veterinary.
Vegetable Cultivator.
Vine Culture.
Yester Land Culture, &c.

Under *Art* the headings of a like class actually found in the Index may perhaps be such as the following :

Acanthus Drawing.
Æsthetic.
Animals Drawing.
Beautiful.
Beauty.
Cartoons.
Chromatography.
Colouring.
Countenance, human, its proportions.
Decoration.
Design,
Drawing.
Duns.
Education of the Eye.

Effect.
Encaustic.
Etching.
Expression.
Figures.
Forest Drawing.
Form.
Frescoes.
Galleries.
Genius.
Giotto.
Harmony.
Head, human its Proportions.
Hues.

Landscape.
Laocoon.
Light.
Lithotint.
Michael Angelo.
Miniature.
Mosaic.
Outline.
Painting.
Park Drawing.
Pencil.
Pencilling.
Perspective.
Pictures.
Pigments.
Portraits.
Proportion.
Raffaele.

Rembrandt.
Rule, Instrument.
Sciography.
Sculpture.
Sepia.
Shades.
Shadow.
Shipping, drawing.
Symmetry.
Tempera.
Tints.
Tracery.
Trees, studies in.
Views.
Water Colour.
Wood-work.
Workmanship, &c.

In collecting and grouping these and other class-lists, the Index does not undertake to say what is Agriculture or Art, and what is not ; nor to decide, for instance, into how many genera animals or plants are divided. The searcher does not want—nor would he thank any one for—such information. The Index merely makes out a list of every topic on Agriculture, or Art, and of all sorts of Animals and Plants, so far as they are to be gathered out of the titles of works existing in the Library. It merely associates works on analogous subjects ; and it is exactly this juxtaposition, that all searchers, whether scientific or not, are most anxious to obtain. Every heading in the Index as far as it is related to other headings, that are representative of topics in Literature, Science, and Art, becomes itself a separate Catalogue of the corresponding class of knowledge, always on a level with its actual state and progress. All these class-lists are, in fact, special Catalogues, illustrative of each branch of human learning. They never become disused nor require re-classification by progress of science or variation of systems. They expand as widely and multifariously as the human mind itself, and they group as comprehensively as the mutual connections, both co-ordinate and subordinate of all things

in the universe. Repetitions are the necessary accompaniment of classed Catalogues, but on this system of classification, they are repetitions of mere headings. Again, the Index as a general Alphabetical Catalogue, makes no class or distinction in entering a topic, but affixes a class-list to every topic that can claim one. The usual system proceeds in the reverse way ;—it begins by making distinctions that necessarily limit the number of admissible topics ; it enters each topic under an artificial class, and appends no class-list to the topic itself. The consequence is, that the searcher not unfrequently looks for a work in a class or section widely different from that under which it is entered; or when he by chance succeeds in guessing its position—if one at all has been assigned to it, amongst the systematic ramifications—he finds no special class-list appended to give him access to the knowledge of what has been written on the subject. The first method sets out from an alphabetical or known arrangement, and leads to class-lists, not artificial, but self-made; the second starts from artificial classing or arbitrary arrangements that pass into a number of separate alphabetical series ;—a difference of a very grave character, as it assumes, in the latter case, the possibility of ramification according to any unobjectionable system. All sciences have a sort of mutual connection which cannot be properly seized, except through the very elements of which they consist. A method that proceeds from class-lists to alphabets is one that begins to compose a whole with its parts before it is acquainted with the parts themselves. That which commences with a universal alphabetical arrangement makes, first, an exact inventory of the parts, thereby gaining an intimate knowledge of their exact number and variety, thence leading onward to the discovery of their mutual dependence, by collecting and grouping according to the actual order that nature has assigned to each. From all times learned men have taken a great deal of pains and engaged in sharp disputes about a ramification *à priori* of the whole circle of human knowledge, and after all have not been able to agree. A classification that proceeds *à posteriori* confines itself to grouping that only which is placed before it ; and this very restriction is the source of its unlimited power of surveying and finding

out all manner of classes, and links in the infinite chain of knowledge. To carry out this universal classification, no particular deep learning or extraordinary acumen is required. It only wants a logical mind; one that is careful about the correct sense in which every word is used by its writer. On this plan it is no objection that the several classes of knowledge are seldom precisely limited in the nature of things by any certain and unalterable bounds, or that by various degrees when near the borders of each other they run into one another so that one hardly knows how to limit them. Its business is not to limit any class; but, on the contrary, to expand it to the utmost of its capabilities, by repeating, when requisite, the same heading under as many classes as it can have the slightest claim to.

Before parting with this subject it is well to propose one more observation to show how class-lists are alike useful for converting the Index into special Catalogues of every topic, and diminishing considerably its bulk by making short-entries of what should otherwise be full-entries.

When a title contains more than one word or heading that require indexing, either with regard to subjects or names, they are independent between themselves or they are not. In the first place, they give rise to as many full-entries in the Index; in the latter case, it may be laid down as a general rule, that there needs be no full-entry, except one as to subjects and one as to names, all the others being short entries. To illustrate this, a work whose writer is stated to be "Buchanan, afterwards F. Hamilton," if fully entered under "Buchanan" needs only a short entry under "Hamilton," or *vice-versa*. The several names will require each a full entry only when belonging to different persons, as "Geography, by G. Long and W. Hughes," for, they are like independent works on the same topic by different authors, bound together in one book. As to subjects, a work on "Beasts, Birds, Flowers, Fruits, Flies, and Worms," requires six full entries, because, in point of fact, they are like so many independent treatises, each on a different subject, from the pen of the same writer. But a work entitled "Law of Entail," needs a full entry under "Entail," and a

short one under "Law." Taking, for instance, a number of the same kind as "Law of Blockade;—Law of Burials;—Law of Barbadoes;—Law of Charities;—Law of Contract;—Law of Copyright;—Law of Elections;—Law of Evidence;—Commercial Law;—Divine Law;—Poor Law;" &c., if we rightly observe, all these titles contribute to the Index two headings each, one common to all of them and one that differs in each of them. This latter supplies all the full entries; and it is quite sufficient as it is alike expedient and logical, that under the heading *Law*, which is common to all, we should find mentioned and displayed, a list of headings of all the separate laws in the Index. This will explain, what at first sight might appear absurd, how the same heading may become a contribution to classes that differ as widely as a Law, for instance, differs from a Plant and a Law and a Plant from an Animal. The heading Barbadoes may offer an instance of this, if there are under it any such full entries as "Barbadoes, Law of,"—"Barbadoes, Animals of,"—"Barbadoes, Plants of." In the like manner, agriculture is a branch that by itself has no connection whatever with the Fine Arts; yet contributions will accede to both of them from one and same heading, as for instance, "Trees," if it happens to have any such full entries as "Trees, planting;"—"Trees, drawing;"—&c.

Thus far, the art of classifying expressed in general terms comes to this simple proposition, that, when a title contributes to the Index more than one heading that are not independent between themselves, they stand to one another in the same relation as a genus to a species, and this relation decides at once which is to be a full entry, and which a short one. The former privilege naturally belongs always to the heading that individualises the most or is the less general; namely, that by which the title differs from other titles.

It will not be amiss to notice in this place how much caution is required as to the precise sense of words, if, in making an Index, we wish to proceed with a light that will clear the way. So uncertain a thing is human language that custom is its sole foundation and support. A proper name may become in some special cases a common name, and a common one may become special, owing

to a special case. For instance, it cannot be affirmed that, in the terms "British Ferns;"—"British Generals;"—"British Army;"—&c., the word *British* is a name in the same sense as it is applied in the expression "British Museum."—According to the former acceptation, the "Bateman Museum" is also a British Museum. But in the special appellation "British Museum" the word *British* is as much a proper name as that of "Bateman," and as such it would be treated in a correct mode of classification.

Let us return back for a little to the formation of the headings from the inventorial entries, with reference to this question of tracing aright the signification of words. It may appear strange why this point should not have been touched on before, but this order has been preferred as the most convenient for the purpose that was in view.

The first observation is, that, as different ideas are very frequently expressed by the same words, it follows that in deciding which words or terms of the title require indexing, we should proceed by those common rules that are applied in all Dictionaries. For instance, a Vocabulary distinguishes the word *Account* where it denotes a reckoning, from where it signifies a mere narrative or description. It defines the term *Art* as meaning Painting and Sculpture; as skill; as a mere power to do anything; or trade; dexterity; cunning; and when it is a verb. So far as the meaning goes it is not one word, but many words widely differing from each other. If due heed be taken not to the words or terms, but to the use of words and terms, there can be no obscurity in deciding when a word is to be marked out for indexing and when not. The same remark holds good when the word requires to be selected for more than one of its many significations, as the term *Church* when it means a place of worship, and when it stands for the collective body of Christians; the term *Acts* when it means Actions; when it stands for Laws and when it signifies the *Acts of the Apostles*. In indexing all these terms or rather significations, they ought to be defined, as they are in Dictionaries, and kept distinct in their separate corresponding sub-alphabetical series, as befits words that, in fact, are different.

Our words and ideas are so linked together that, very frequently, several distinct words designate but one single undivided thing. The appellation "Great Britain" expresses by two words a thing which is as much single as that designated by the words "United States;" or "New York;" or "Berwick-upon-Tweed;" and the like. Thus far they are more than one word only in appearance.

Another instance of terms that are complex in words, but not in things, are proverbs, maxims, mottoes and similar. A Dictionary of proverbs ranges them according to the alphabetical place due to the first word, because no one would ever think of searching for a proverb as such under any other word, just as no person would look for the name of *England* under its second syllable. The name of a proverb is the proverb itself. So the name of a Scriptural or other text, is the text itself in the order in which it stands. A work entitled "It is written," if it is really a work on this text, cannot be expected to appear under any other alphabetical place than that of its first word.

It is hardly necessary to mention, that words which have obtained more than one mode of spelling, ought to be treated in the Index in the same manner as they are in Vocabularies.

It will appear from the foregoing, that the Index which has been described is, in point of fact, equipollent to what in the usual system is called a general alphabetical Catalogue of the whole Library, *plus* a copious reference to all kinds of names and subjects; and *plus* classified Catalogues of all manner of topics. According to the existing plan a Catalogue does not profess, as regards subjects, to give an entire transcript of the title-page but only so much as may be necessary to exhibit all that the author wishes to convey in the titular description of his work. An Index to an inventory does precisely the same, with this great advantage over the old system,—that a "Book of Beasts, Birds &c.," as far as the number of subject-words in this title is concerned, is entered in the Index as fully as in a Catalogue although each entry in the former may consist of only one subject-word at a time. Again, however more extensive the number of entries of the same book in the

Index may be than in a Catalogue, yet they scarcely require so much space as a single one would in a Catalogue.

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC REMARKS ADDED TO THE ENTRY OF
A BOOK.**

We now come to the Bibliographical part of the inventory. We have laid down that the inventorial entry should consist of the mere transcript of the title-page, followed, when necessary, by the Librarian's own account of the book. There are thousands of cases in which we would have nothing to say about a book. But it is admitted that, when requisite, the Librarian should add bibliographical remarks stating every peculiarity of the book. So far we have advanced nothing that is not already granted and actually carried out. But let us inquire into the true sense of this question, and ask, what is the end proposed? On a correct answer the true solution is necessarily dependent.

There are two very different aspects under which either a printed book or a manuscript may be considered:—one is as a literary work; the other, as an object of art or antiquity. The works which have been printed on vellum, have almost all been reprinted in other forms, and, as far as their contents are concerned, Literature would lose nothing if the originals were destroyed. Black; Saxon; and Gothic letters are not the intellectual treasures which the student seeks for in ancient books. Conversely, the contents of a Bible which can be bought for one shilling are not the object which obtains the price of 1,500*l.* and makes it the most precious article of a Library. In truth an article of art or antiquity, as such, is not a book, nor is a book, as such, an article of art or antiquity. It follows that when a book unites the two properties, the Librarian's account of such a book, must not serve Literature at the expense of Art nor the latter at the expense of the former but it must equally assist their different ends and designs by corresponding means. In this simple view, these two kinds of assistance would be developed conspicuously and kept entirely distinct. Let us consider, first, what is the duty of a Librarian towards Literature in reference to the intellectual value of a book.

**TRANSLATION OF THE TITLES THAT ARE NOT IN THE
NATIONAL LANGUAGE.**

The inventorial entry being assumed to begin with a transcript of the title-page, the first service that we should expect is to find it followed by a translation whenever the title is either totally or partially in a language which we do not understand. Without this, the book—and, so far—the Library, is of no use to us, as regards that preliminary assistance which Catalogues are, and must be intended to afford. This proposition, expressed in general terms, amounts to the following: that Catalogues of public Libraries ought to give, in addition to the title-page, its translation as full, and to the extent in which it does not appear in the national language. No exception to this rule in favour of any of the foreign languages can be fair under the idea that it is generally known. The student who is not acquainted with the French language, and those who do not understand German, Russian, Arabic, Hindu, &c., are equally entitled to the advantage of learning whether the foreign book bears so far upon the subject of their studies as will repay them the trouble of acquiring the language or the expense of a consultation through others. But the chief object of an annexed translation is not so much that the inventory itself should point out the contents of a book in the native language of those for whose service the Library is intended, as to afford them the means of searching it out, in other words, to supply the entries to the Index. The Index being professedly a finding or working Catalogue of the whole Library it must, as a necessary consequence, speak the native language of those to whom it undertakes to teach the knowledge of books. Nothing can claim exemption from this demand, except proper names and only such of these as have not obtained the native orthography. In this respect the Index stands to the inventory as a transition book or a Grammar from a known to an unknown language. If the entries of subjects were taken from their original foreign language untranslated, the Index would be of no general use, and moreover analogous subjects would not meet in the alphabetical arrangement; "England" would not associate with "Angle-

terre," nor these again with "Inghilterra," and thus the end of the Index, would be defeated. Conflicting alphabetical orders and strange characters would increase the confusion, and some languages could find no place at all, as the Chinese which is said has no alphabetical order.

SEPARATE INDEXES TO THE CATALOGUES OF BOOKS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

This by no means implies, that separate indexes to as many separate portions of the Library as there are original languages in it, should not be undertaken for the convenience of their respective scholars; but for the general accommodation of the public at large, it is evident that a general Index to a national Library should speak the national language and should need no interpreter.

LACUNÆ IN TITLE-PAGES.

Next to the translation of title-pages it is the duty of a Librarian to supply any *lacunæ* in the title-pages themselves. In order to attain this end in a satisfactory manner we must enquire what a *lacuna* in a title-page is. This question depends upon another; what a title-page is or is expected to be. Librarians have agreed to divide it into five parts, the known elements which are comprised in the entry of a book into Catalogues, namely: TITLE, meaning the subject; NAME, of Author or other writer, PLACE; DATE; and SIZE; to which are occasionally added the number of the edition, of pages, and other minor peculiarities.

Now as regards name, place, and date Librarians spare no pains to find them out when any of these does not appear on the title-page; and if the book happens to have no title-page at all, they endeavour either to lodge in the Catalogue the first and last words of the book or to give some such description as will identify it without any fear of mistake. This is tantamount to forwarding the interests of Art alone, and forgetting those of Literature. It is well and good to ascertain the exact typographical value of a book by scrutinising so far into the statements of its title-page, as to detect the real name of the writer, when

it is not expressed or is concealed under initials, or pseudonymous. It is useful to discover whether a work is disclaimed by its author as being spurious, altered, subreitious, or a fraud; whether the date or imprint is *bona fide*. It is fit the Librarians should know the history of the book and inform us which is the *editio princeps* which the last, or the best, or the rarest, or the most valuable, or the most curious. Literature will not be jealous of these attentions paid to her sister. She only claims an equal share in the zeal and labour of Librarians. She requires to know as much the real subject and contents as the real author and imprint of a book. She expects that the Librarian will take for her the same trouble in respect to the subject of a work as he takes to ascertain the name of its writer, and that he will endeavour to illuminate her paths not less before a pseudo-subject than before a pseudonym. Often the name of the author cannot be detected; but it is always possible to find out the real bearing of a book. The difficulty of defining such works as may happen to be not precisely limited in their subjects by any certain bounds can scarcely be an objection. In supplying a *lacuna* regarding the contents, no critical opinion is demanded but only such general information about the character of a book as could be readily obtained by its perusal, and oftentimes by looking over its principal sections only, or even its own Index.

LACUNÆ IN RESPECT TO THE SUBJECTS OF BOOKS HOW TO BE SUPPLIED.

It is acknowledged that the progress of Literature is greatly retarded by Catalogues giving no clue to the real contents of an immense number of nameless, but most important, pamphlets on every topic. In the National Library of a wealthy country where expense should be no objection, the Librarian ought to be empowered to avail himself of the services of competent persons in every branch to supply him with reports on *lacunæ* of this kind that exist in the title-pages of books; and then the Librarian himself should draw up from such reports a proper account, that may be considered authoritative, and which then

might be annexed to the inventorial entry, thereby preparing the right materials for the Index.

In order to supply aright any *lacunæ* in reference to the true contents of a book, we must enquire again what is the end proposed, and how the contents of a book are or ought to be defined.

It is evident that there are two distinct things to be attended to in reference to the contents of a book. These are what we may call its NATURE and its SUBJECTS. A Geologist who is searching for works on the "Deluge" would be misled if he were given a list of all works on this subject without being also informed that one book is a poem; another a drama; or an allegory; or a sermon; or music; or a critique on an oratorio; or a series of maps or engravings; or perhaps a novel; and so on. The nature of a book decides the place in which its subject should be indexed. When both or either of them is wanting in the book's title-page, the *lacuna* or *lacunæ* must be supplied with as much care and diligence as are devoted to discover the name of the writer and the imprint of the work. It is by a partial compliance with this essential canon of the art of cataloguing, that large libraries make separate Catalogues and departments of maps, music, and prints. Yet these words are but headings in a general alphabetical finding Catalogue of the whole Library; and it is quite possible that many a single heading as *Medicine; Philosophy; History; Poetry; Novels; Comedies; Plays; &c.* will store more volumes of entries than are filled by the entries of *Maps, Music, and Prints*. Let then the nature of the book be first stated in its most specific sense and when it appears on the title-page, let it be not without an inquiry whether it is the real or a pseudo one. The Librarian should exercise with regard to these things just the same caution that he employs respecting names, places, and dates. He should also follow the same course with regard to subjects. Finally, let him enter his own statements in the inventorial Catalogue only as additions of his own to the transcripts of the title-pages, and he will thus confer an immense boon on Literature and Science, and no one can find fault with or withhold his gratitude for what might perhaps be only a different manner of viewing the same book.

As the strict definition of the meaning of words frees us from the confusion of their different senses, and decides, as we have seen, whether or not a word is to be marked out for indexing, so the definition of the NATURE and SUBJECTS of a book will guard the index-maker against confusion, and will decide at once whether both or only one of them is to contribute its heading or headings to the Index, and also whether the corresponding entry shall be a full or a short one. If the nature and subject of a book are properly stated on the title-page, or supplied in the additional remarks, no controversy can arise as to what and how many headings are to be contributed by the inventorial entry. The question may be put only as a general principle whether or not it is useful to index the nature of a book when expressed or represented by the words *Grammar*; *Dictionary*; *Glossary*; *Vocabulary*; *Lexicon*; *Cyclopædia*; *Encyclopædia*; *Gazetteer*; *Treatise*; *Dissertation*; *Oration*; *Essay*; *Thesis*; *Controversy*; *Sermon*; *Lecture*; *Addresses*; *Letters*; *Correspondence*; *Despatches*; *Novels*; *Travels*; *Voyages*; *Stories*; *Romances*; *Tracts*; *Tragedies*; *Comedies*; *Plays* &c., &c.

Since each and every heading in the Index will refer, as we have seen, to its synonyms in the same Index, and since an Index to every word that has any useful meaning in the inventorial entry, will be found after all desirable, all these questions are easily disposed of. After the same manner a question may be put also as a general principle, and as easily solved, in reference to headings of subjects, whether they should be entered inside only or both inside and outside the heading of the nature of the corresponding book. Whether, for instance, the heading "Liturgy" when only the subject of a Sermon, shall appear as a sub-heading under the heading *Sermon* only, or also as a principal heading in the general Index, in juxtaposition with all the other principal entries of this subject; and also whether or not the same course should be followed out when it is only the subject of a poem, or of a novel, &c.

Let it be noted, however, that it is neither useful or necessary to run through all the modes, circumstances, and relations of the contents of a book in order to seize what may be most descriptive of the real design of him that wrote it. Nor, when the subject of a book is correctly

stated is always indispensable to state its nature also, nor, conversely, when the nature is described is always required to state the subject. Oftentimes the nature and subject of a book are one and the same thing. There are political pamphlets that may be considered sufficiently described when they are stated to be so, if the name of the party to whom they belong be also correctly given.

It has been a matter of discussion what books should be considered pamphlets and what not. If this appellation is intended merely to refer to the SIZE of a book, the question can be scarcely worth considering; but if it is meant to refer to the NATURE of a work, it may be considered to be of the same class and to stand in the same connexion with the word *Treatise* as the words *Tract*; *Hints*; *Remarks*; &c., when these terms are descriptive of the nature of the books to which they are affixed. In this case it is a matter of mere convenience to decide whether or not the term *Pamphlet* should be admitted as a heading when it appears either on the title-page or in the additional part of the inventorial entry.

From the brief survey we have taken of the manner in which the contents of a book require description in the interests of Literature and Science, it will be clear that it can hardly be considered a task of any difficulty, or imply an addition of any considerable length to the transcript of the title-page. There can scarcely be any case in which the nature of a book requires more than one single word for its enunciation; and as to subjects, the number of terms cannot but be very limited, except when the book itself is a polymathy, having a bearing upon many independent subjects.

These are all the *lacunæ* in the title-pages which it is the common interest of Literature and Art to have properly filled up, and as it is out of these elements that the right materials for indexing must be drawn, it is indispensable that they should form an integral part of the inventorial entry.

OTHER BIBLIOGRAPHICAL COMMENTS.

The remaining bibliographical remarks chiefly concern the book as an article of art and curiosity, and may be

most conveniently referred to and developed in a separate companion to the inventorial Catalogue in the manner of a detached commentary that can be consulted by all those who take an especial interest in it.

The inventorial entries being progressively numbered, this supplies each book for ever with an official residence, from whence it sends and advertises the number of its own address to the Index, to the detached commentaries, to the shelves of the Library, and to all whom it may concern ;—the account of the book itself being always ready at its inventorial domicile to answer all inquiries whenever called upon.

Let this inventory of the title-pages be printed, and soon Literature and Science, aided by competition, will find and employ the men who would be necessary to prepare all sorts of bibliographical *desiderata*, and to execute the Index. That all kinds of useful bibliographical information would come in separately to the inventory from every bibliographer in the world, may be inferred from the fact of many important and very useful bibliographical works having been published of late. Van Praet has printed a notice of all the vellum books he could know of existing in any country. Bibliography, indeed, must be given a much freer scope than a mere Catalogue can afford. The necessary conciseness of an inventorial entry allows too little room for it to display all its resources and to give to the world such information as Art has a right to expect. Some very rare and curious books have a long and interesting history of their own origin and adventures to relate ; others to state their claims to a high and perhaps unique value. Almost every other book has some peculiarities, either external or internal, requiring a description that ought not to interfere with the cataloguing. A Library may possess works of which it cannot be expected to acquire all the different editions or all the works of the same author ; yet literary persons expect that a Librarian should know and give information respecting the whole of these. Some go further and wish that, after the example of Watt's *Bibliotheca*, the Librarian should give some historical notice of the authors.—And, how useful to Literature and Science, and highly creditable to a Library would it be if information were given whether the book has been

reviewed, criticised, translated, commented on, or whether it has been noticed by any historian or author, and, if existing and catalogued in other Libraries, what other useful bibliographical knowledge is given that is worth mentioning! There is no useful record that might not be expected, and Bibliography would not readily endeavour to supply, when it is divested of all restrictions imposed upon it by the narrow bounds of a Catalogue-entry and allowed to yield full obedience to its chief design only.

We have now sufficiently gone through all the principles by the application of which we can alone arrive at the most perfect, simple, and successful system of cataloguing a Library. We have seen how every bibliographical description of a book that is not a translation of the title-page or a supply of some *lacuna* in the title-page itself, is a distinct work, that can and ought to be prepared and printed separately from the inventorial Catalogue. In fact, it is a commentary upon a classical original work—the title-page—that needs not to be compelled to stand in the way of the generality of those students who come to inquire about a book, but which must be ready at hand for the convenience of others, however few, that take an interest in it. We have seen also that the translation of the title-pages and the supplying of their *lacunæ* are to form an integral part of the inventorial entry, only for the purpose of indexing. It follows, then, that this work needs not be incorporated with the transcript of the original title-pages. In a system in which the inventorial entries are arranged not alphabetically, but by progressive numbering,—the book is fixed to a number that gives it a ready address for every purpose. Complaints arise respecting alphabetical Catalogues having supplements, that oblige readers to go over more than one alphabetical series before they can get to the object of their inquiry. But in this system the separate works become, from the very fact of being separate, a source of simplicity and convenience instead of hindrance, for, they are not supplements to the principal work, but are themselves the principal work in its separate departments. If we suppose the title-page transcribed, then followed by a translation, and all *lacunæ* supplied, these again accompanied by other bibliographical comments, all this will form

an entry, composed of three distinct sections or paragraphs, that have as much right to fill up three distinct portions of the same page as three distinct volumes or series of volumes, each of a different work, so long as they continue to be three distinct departments of the same thing or entry. They stand to one another as a text to a translation and a commentary, which can either be printed separately as three independent works or incorporated into one work, the text on one side of the page, the translation on the other, with the commentary at the bottom. It belongs to the Index, the general alphabetical Catalogue in this system, to communicate the knowledge of any book, and to give its inventorial address. If you want the book itself, this address is the key that opens to you the place of its deposit or shelf without further trouble. If you only want to see the frontispiece, it is this address that places before you the title-page itself, pointing out to you the only volume, page, and the exact line of the inventory that will not disappoint you. And, as the Index speaking your own language, informs you what different language or languages the book is in, the same address will—if such is your want or pleasure—send you direct to the translated inventory, and there with equal promptitude, equal exactness, and equal regard to your being spared all extraneous trouble, will display before you the title-page translated on purpose for your convenience, from the original by a competent hand. Finally, if you are only searching for Bibliographical information, it is again this same address, that takes you directly to the right place and opens for you the only page of the commentary that contains the knowledge you are in search of. Thus one and the same number sends readers actuated by different purposes, to three different corresponding places, or rather to the same title-page in its three different forms, the original, the translated, and the commented.

HAND-CATALOGUE FOR THE INTERNAL SERVICE . OF LIBRARIES.

It may refer to a fourth form for a fourth different purpose,—that of the attendants of the Library itself.

This is a mere list of all the progressive numbers, placed side by side with the corresponding press-mark or indication of the place in which the book stands on the shelves of the Library. In this form it becomes compressed into a single pocket volume or hand-book, containing only numbers in sets of double corresponding columns;—the one column running with the progressive number of each book in the inventory; the opposite column exhibiting the corresponding press-mark of the book on the shelves. Only one of the two columns or series of numbers requires to be printed;—the other may be in manuscript, or in pencil to suit the removal of books from shelf to shelf. If every attendant is provided with a copy of this hand-book for his exclusive use; readers asking for books might well be spared even the trouble of transcribing the press-mark or any title at all, as they need only write down the inventorial number as given in the Index or anywhere else. This hand-book will enable the attendant to find at once without loss of time any book on the shelves when the inventorial number is given. But the internal service of a Library requires also a ready means of finding any book in the inventory when the place on the shelves is given. This may be obtained by the reverse arrangement of the same hand-book;—that is, the first or printed column running with the progressive number of each room, shelf, and press in the Library, and the opposite or pencilled column running with the corresponding number in the inventory. This shows that the presses themselves of the whole Library might, with greater simplicity, and uniformity, be numbered progressively as the books themselves in the Inventory; and although, of course, the same book needs not to obtain the same number in the two series, every place in the Library would become fixed to a single number, divested of all algebraical affixes. The same printed series of progressive numbers might answer to the inventorial series in one case, and to the shelving series in the other; and thus printed copies of the same hand-book might serve the two purposes, by a mere transposition of their application.

We have, then, a Catalogue of one and the same thing in a variety of forms, disposed in due manner in order to attain ends that are different. It is this distinction that

must be kept in mind, to secure the cataloguing of a Library from that confusion, obscurity, imperfection and failure, which unavoidably attend a Catalogue made on the old plan, even with the brightest abilities and the greatest zeal and diligence.

PREPARING AND PRINTING THE CATALOGUE OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM LIBRARY.

Let us now consider the question of preparing and printing a Catalogue of the British Museum Library on the proposed plan.

It is clear that when once the transcript of all the title-pages is obtained, what remains may be wholly an outdoor work.

It is clear also, that, if we rest for the present content with printing only such bibliographical descriptions and such supplied *lacunæ* as are actually already prepared in the existing Catalogues of the Library, leaving for some future period what may be still wanting in this respect, there is nothing in the whole transaction that cannot be conveniently executed by contract, to be commenced at once and completed in a very short time, if money is no objection, and a sufficient number of hands be engaged.

The thing required to be done divides itself into three distinct operations, viz. : transcribing ; translating ; and indexing ; to be carried on concurrently each by a different staff. The transcription, translation, and index, to be printed as three independent and distinct works.

As fast as a title-page is transcribed and fixed to a progressive number it may be forwarded to the printer of the inventory ; and equally as fast as it is either transcribed or printed proofs can be obtained, gives at the same time work to the translator and to the index-maker ; the translator himself sending work in its turn to the printer of the translation and to the index-maker with equal speed and continuity.

Seeing that the inventory admits of no shortening or alteration whatever of the original title-page, it appears that, so far as transcribing goes, no advantage can be derived from the existing Catalogues of the Library, except extracting whatever information is there already prepared

in reference to *lacunæ* and other bibliographical remarks. This is, again, a work of mere transcription. In order to be certain that all the books are catalogued, the title-pages must be copied *verbatim* from the books themselves, shelf by shelf, through the whole Library in an uninterrupted progress and each transcript only delivered to the printer when certified by an officer of the Library or any appointed reviser who should vouch for its genuineness.

ESTIMATE OF THE TIME, LABOUR AND EXPENSE
REQUIRED.

It appears that the books at present in the presses of the British Museum Library, measure a length of between fifteen and sixteen miles. It is then a question of mere local convenience what number of transcribers should be appointed to each mile of shelving. Assuming that it is not too much to appoint ten transcribers to each mile, and assign to every ten transcribers one reviser to vouch for their transcripts, and two attendants to take down and replace the books as soon as they are done with; the whole of these persons may be considered readers, and, as such, entitled to the use of all the books they ask for, as any reader in the reading room. It is stated that some reader has had on one occasion as many as 261 volumes kept from day to day for his exclusive use. Under the circumstances proposed, no book remains engaged more than a few minutes. Thus, so far as time is concerned, the inventory of the whole Library would be commenced and completed in as short a period as ten transcribers could copy *verbatim* the title-pages of all the books on one mile of shelving; the entire staff at work consisting of 160 transcribers, 16 revisers and 32 attendants. The pay of all these persons and the cost of writing materials would represent the expense of preparing the inventory for the press.

It appears also that these sixteen miles of shelving contain from 700,000 to 800,000 volumes, many of them being from two to twenty and more separate works bound in one volume, and many others being only one out of many volumes of the same work. Assuming that the two differences compensate each other, then the in-

ventory will contain some 800,000 entries of as many distinct works numbered progressively from 1 to 800,000.

There are very long title-pages and there are very short ones. Assuming an average of 350 letters to every title-page, then the whole inventory, if printed in the type and size of Low's "British Catalogue," at the rate of 70 letters per line; 5 lines per entry; 16 entries per page; and 1,000 pages per volume, would consist of 50 volumes. This will determine the cost of printing, which of course can be commenced without delay and carried on concurrently with transcribing, since each successive volume is but a continuation of the preceding, or rather an independent, though connected livraison of a series in progress.*

The same observations, both as to time and cost of simultaneous preparing and printing are applicable to the translated inventory, with the only difference that this work can be performed outside the Museum by a separate staff, and printed by a separate typographer; and is far less extensive, since it only embraces such title-pages as are not wholly in the English language.

And now as to the Index.

This is likewise a work that can be commenced and carried on simultaneously with the other two, by a third distinct staff outside the Museum. They receive all the title-pages in English either in an original or translated form as fast as they are transcribed and translated or as fast as printed proofs can be obtained respectively. These are gone over by one person who marks through, by a stroke of the pen or pencil, what words in each inventory entry are to be indexed,—that is, are to become so many headings of as many corresponding entries of the same work in the Index.

When a heading is given, the other words of which the corresponding entry in the Index is to consist, are necessarily determined and very limited in number. It follows then, that the process of drawing out and writing down on slips the entries for the Index, when the headings are marked out, becomes a comparatively mechanical task; and that as many separate hands can simultaneously be put to work on it, as will be enough for the index-entries

*It appears that eminent Printers agree in the opinion of the practicability of printing direct from the title-pages. In such a case much time and money would be saved.

being written out on slips as fast as the headings are marked out by one person; and also for the slips being simultaneously sorted and alphabetically arranged by a fourth distinct staff as fast as they are written out. The time, therefore, in which the whole Index can be prepared and alphabetically arranged in slips, will be represented by the time required by only one person carefully reading over the contents of 50 volumes of 1,000 pages each, and marking through all words that require reference.

Its bulk can also be determined.

Since, as we have seen, the number of words which an entry in the Index consists of, is by itself always very limited; assuming a maximum of 50 letters to every entry, if printed in the type and 8vo size of Low's "Index to the British Catalogue," at the rate of 1 line per entry; 100 lines per column; 2 columns per page; and 1,000 pages per volume;—and assuming as many as 4,000,000 entries, or an average of 5 index-entries to every inventorial one;—the bulk of the Index will be represented by 20 volumes or less than half the bulk of the original inventory.

Here it is proper to remark what may be at first sight not so easy to understand, that in order to secure correctness, and above all to save much labour, time, and expense in printing, it is of the greatest importance that the whole Index as now written and alphabetically arranged in slips should be privately printed before it is prepared for the public press. The greatest economy in printing is obtained when the printer has to make no corrections, except his own. Then the exact cost can be ascertained. The Index at this stage necessitates two more operations: revising by the same person who has marked out the headings; and preparing an Index to the Index itself, that is, the formation of class-lists or short-entries. It is only on printed forms of the whole Index as it now stands that these two operations can be carried out in such a manner as to secure at the same time the greatest accuracy and the greatest economy of labour and time as well as to avoid all corrections in printing that are not those appertaining to the printer himself; corrections being a serious drawback both with regard to time and expense, as every one who has prepared alphabetical catalogues for the press must know.

In an extensive alphabetical Catalogue every heading is by itself a whole dictionary, or catalogue of sub-headings, which again require sorting and strict alphabetical arrangement. Many a word that naturally came second in writing out the separate slips will require removing to a third place, and *vice-versa*, when the entries of the same heading in the first alphabetical arrangement are brought in juxtaposition and their mutual relations detected. This will involve many entries being sub-alphabetically shifted out of their first alphabetical position, from page to page, and perhaps from volume to volume. In this operation, entries of the same kind must be embraced at one view, in order to compare, to understand, and to arrange them correctly. A person cannot see more than one or two manuscript entries at a time, if they are in detached slips; but in printed sheets he has placed before him in a legible, accessible, and simultaneous succession, a whole branch of analogous entries. If the reviser commands the advantage which print possesses over manuscript,—compression, diffusion, and facility for perusal, he is enabled to parcel out the whole task among as many sub-revisers as may be convenient. All alterations, corrections, and corrections upon corrections may be thus prepared for him with that degree of consideration, accuracy, single-superintendence and expedition which is essential to such an undertaking; and he will be enabled to super-revise all revisions with comparatively but little trouble and outlay of time, by simply running over the whole Index (when so prepared) with his eye.

Thus much with respect to revision.

Now, as to the formation of class-lists.—This is another separate department or work. It can, therefore, be commenced and carried on concurrently with the revision, by as many separate hands as will be sufficient to complete it within the same time as such revision. It is, again, a work that could not be prepared from manuscript, except at an immense unnecessary expense of labour and time. When printed copies are disposable, it can be conducted by an indefinite number of persons with as great speed as they can read over the whole number of headings in the Index. A single printed copy can give work to one hundred and more persons at a time, by as many printed pages or sheets

in succession of the Index being distributed to them singly to read over, each selecting different class-lists, and so continuing the process from sheet to sheet, each receiving the next sheet from the next fellow-collector.

As one person alone marked out the headings, so the same should give directions for collecting, grouping, and revising all class-lists; he, himself surveying the whole as he last revises.

There is a mathematical precision attached to an alphabetical Catalogue, on this plan, that is so far advantageous as to leave no room to arbitrariness, and consequently is alike useful to furnish a true and certain method, and to render its execution both easy and regular. The difficulty as to the rate of progress and economy of expense is only to be met by twice printing; that is, twice delivering to the printer, what is, each time placed beyond all corrections, except his own. An essential peculiarity of this course is, that the cost and time of printing can be exactly determined. Assuming that it is not too much to expect some 4,000,000 of lines to be printed within one year from the day they are delivered to the printer, or printers, placed beyond correction, as above, and admitting that all additions to the Library, and consequently to the Inventory, have been regularly entered in the Index, so long as it has been under formation and revision, it follows that this alphabetical Catalogue will contain all the books in the Library, up to within one year of its publication.

CATALOGUING YEARLY ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY.

A national Library whose large staff is at length released from the immense burden of cataloguing its general contents, can now afford so to prepare and keep up a yearly index to the additions, that every new additional index shall refund into one all the preceding ones. Again, a national Library that can afford the munificence of increasing at the rate of some 20,000 volumes a year, might well afford also the expense of printing a yearly volume of index, that increases only at the rate of a few hundred pages a year, thus giving readers and the public in no case more than two Indexes to consult,—the principal and the ad-

ditional,—the one fixed, the other progressive,—till the time arrived when a new edition of the principal Index being demanded, the additional one would be incorporated with it, and another commenced and kept up by yearly refunding and printing as before, to be itself in due time swallowed up by the principal Index.

GENERAL AND EVERLASTING USEFULNESS OF SUCH INVENTORY AND INDEX.

The production of such an Index to the printed Literature in the British Museum is well worthy the efforts necessary for its attainment. In point of fact, it would be a general Catalogue enabling any person to find any book, or author, and to find who wrote on any subject. Its entries though succinct would yet contain all that is necessary and sufficient to trace a book. In it every heading that contained any considerable number of entries, would be itself a special catalogue, rendering the Index purchasable not merely as a set, but in separate portions. Purchasers would buy what related to their own subject of research. Some would prefer history; and others poetry; each scientific branch would find separate purchasers; whilst all public institutions, both at home and abroad, would not be content unless put in possession of the whole. If the Museum were burnt to the ground, its Inventory and its Index would never lose one iota of their colossal usefulness; but on the contrary they would ever continue to be an example of well-spent money, not only for the service of the British nation, but as aiding the progress of civilization all over the world;—a lasting means of access to all the intellectual treasures there represented,—a perennial encouragement to Science and Literature. The great Library of the British Museum is now national, but it would then become cosmical, it would be visited and explored by the literary and scientific representatives of all civilized countries, and it would be the pride of the whole republic of Letters. The world has a right to expect this from England. Yea, wealthy England might do more than this!

A GENERAL INDEX TO THE CATALOGUES OF ALL THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

It is her boast that the Sun never sets on her dominions. Why should it ever set for her over any public Library in the world? If her national library, so far as regards a ready access to the knowledge of all its contents, be thrown open to all the world by an Inventory and an Index, why should not an universal Inventory and an universal Index illuminate for her the shelves of all the public Libraries on the face of the earth? A collection of the catalogues of the Libraries existing in this country, united to a collection of the catalogues of all the Libraries in the world would be a Library of Catalogues. So far it would be a Library containing all the Libraries in the world. Let then these catalogues as they stand be considered in the room of as many Inventories of the corresponding Libraries and let one general Index to them all, be undertaken and printed. The subject itself is of such transcendent importance that it is well worthy the power, the liberality, and the Literature of a Great Country.

CATALOGUING ARTICLES OF PERIODICALS AND TRANSACTIONS.

There is yet one more idea which Literature and Science look to England to realize, thereby setting a glorious example to all public Libraries in forwarding the general interests of progress and civilization. In the simple system of cataloguing a Library by merely transcribing the title-pages into an inventory and separately commenting, translating and indexing the same according to their requirements, we have, as it were, an original classical work, the title-pages, upon which are written or compiled several separate works,—a Translation, a Commentary, an Index. Now, if one more work on Homer, or other classic were added to the many already existing, it certainly would never stand in their way by rendering an additional service to the common cause. Then let there be undertaken another separate work on the Inventory, in which the inventorial entries shall be expanded and resolved into a sub-inventory of the contents of all books that are com-

posed of more than one work. All such books as Transactions, Magazines, Periodicals, and the like, are in themselves so many separate Libraries. The volumes of which they consist are so many shelves; the papers which they contain are so many separate works, whose titles are their title-pages. These should be first inventoried and then indexed. There are in every branch of science, many articles and memoirs of great importance, equivalent to great works, written by distinguished Authors, many of whom never published separate books, but have confined their communications to Academies and Periodicals; yet so long as they are left in the obscurity in which they lie buried from the want of proper cataloguing, they are of no service to Literature and Science. It has been observed how often labour and time have been expended upon subjects which have been written on by a great number of persons previously, but which from the want of some reference to them have not been discovered till too late. Why should Librarians take pains to catalogue every diminutive pamphlet or tract, merely because it has been published as a separate work, and, on the contrary, should take no notice of many others, merely because they are published together in one work? It is admitted, as being essential to the use of a Library, that there should be a catalogue which shall give information on every book in the Library. Let us inquire, What is a book? If answered that it is a work it would be only giving it another name, but that is not a solution of the question.

WHAT IS A WORK.

Librarians go so far as to distinguish separate works only when bound, but not when printed in one. But it is clear that a work cannot be defined as a mere synonym of an imprint. Nor can the distinction be dependent upon the mere size of a book, seeing that even a single-paged tract or almanack, when published separately, is admitted to the honour of a separate entry in Catalogues. Let us not be content with obscure and confused ideas, when clearer ones are to be obtained even from Librarians themselves, who, in fact, have set down a very distinct criterion of what a work is, when they agreed that an

entry in a Catalogue should always contain, if possible, five elements: subject, name, place, date, and size.

Here, then we have the requisites that, according to the notion of Librarians, constitute a work. They themselves carry out this rule so far that, even when only one of these elements is changed, all the others remaining the same, the work is considered distinct. For instance, a book with a mere difference either in size or date is separately entered as ANOTHER EDITION. *A fortiori*, whenever there is any difference either in the subject or name of the writer, we must consider a distinct work to exist, no matter in what outward disguise or company the work itself makes its appearance. From the Librarian's own definition of a work, the smallest article in a Periodical or any memoir in Transactions contains a representation of as many properties as belong to the most voluminous separately printed work; namely, a subject; a writer, whether his name is expressed or not; a place and date of imprint; a size with the number of pages or lines instead of volumes. In order to make a Catalogue useful for the purpose of Literature and Science, it is indispensable that there should be the means of reference, not only to all works published separately, but to all works whatever, so long as they are distinct works in themselves. This facility would be unique indeed, a great boon to Literature, an incalculable benefit to the progress of Science.

CATALOGUING PRINTS, MAPS, MUSIC AND MSS.

After the account given of the two chief objects of the Catalogue of a Library, namely: Inventory and Index, it is hardly requisite to dwell upon the necessity of applying the same principles to manuscripts; prints; maps; and music. It is evident enough that they ought to be first inventoried and then indexed; that the inventorial entry should consist of exactly the same elements and properties as those set down by Librarians for printed books, besides such additional descriptions as may be requisite to identify or illustrate them; that whenever any of these properties is wanting or false, this should be considered as a *desideratum* to be supplied in the best possible manner; and that the materials for indexing should be only selec-

ted from those inventorial elements when properly prepared and cleared from all *lacunæ*. Lastly, let us add; that these inventories may and should be all separate but that so far as indexing is concerned, their materials had better be all consolidated and contained in one single universal Index.

As a finding and working Catalogue for the purposes of Literature, Science and Art, the Index should contain a reference not only to all printed works on a subject, but also to all manuscripts upon the same subject. Again, there are a great many prints, drawings, and maps, illustrating subjects of history, arts or sciences, and it is convenient that the Index should embrace a reference to them in juxtaposition with the reference on the subjects of printed books. Until this is done they remain hidden and are comparatively useless.

CATALOGUES OF ALL THE COLLECTIONS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

The British Museum is perhaps the only institution in the world that combines in one national establishment a large Library and a most extensive collection of Antiquities; Medals; Coins; Minerals; Zoological and Botanical Specimens. All the various objects of these collections are as interesting to Literature, Science, and Art, as the books are themselves. They are all works falling within much the same definition that Librarians have agreed on with respect to written or printed books. If it be convenient that a finding and working Catalogue should contain a joint reference to printed books, to manuscripts, to prints and drawings, it is certainly no less important, nor less conducive to the spread of knowledge, that some analogous process should afford the means of a ready reference to these articles,—the themes themselves of treatises and descriptions in books, prints, and drawings. Without an Inventory, and an Index to the Inventory these collections cannot be rendered as useful as they might and ought to be. Most of the general and special principles upon which a good system of Cataloguing a collection of books are dependent, might be rehearsed and applied here to collections of every different article in the Museum,

both as regards a full inventorial description and a general alphabetical finding Index. These collections require also classification, which an Index to their Index can alone supply in the simplest and most unobjectionable manner.

A good system of cataloguing is the surveying instrument of all the collections as well as the eye-piece to each separate article. It is no less essential to illuminate the path of scientific inquiry, than to insure the safe custody and the proper arrangement of its treasures.

SPECIAL DEPARTMENT IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM FOR THE FORMATION OF ALL CATALOGUES.

On considering the vast importance attached to Catalogues,—an importance that decides itself of the utility or inutility of collections, we can no longer wonder at the many discussions to which they have given rise.

The prosperity of such an institution as the British Museum, and the whole cause of human progress are deeply involved in the existence of good Catalogues, both of British and Foreign Collections. And to do justice to such an object, a special Department with a distinct officer ~~and it should be added~~ to the Institution, whose business should be 1st.—The formation of the Catalogues of all the several Collections, that is, of the whole contents of the Museum; 2nd.—The procuration and collection of Catalogues of all public Libraries in this country and abroad; and lastly, the preparation of a truly universal encyclopedic Index to the whole of them. The Keepers of the separate departments should simply deliver to the cataloguing department an official or technical description,—that is, an inventorial entry—of every article as it is admitted into their respective collections, and it should be the duty of the cataloguing department to do all that remains to be done. The several Keepers should be relieved of all labours that are extraneous to the safe custody and good preservation of the articles; and the Cataloguing Department should strive to render these articles available for the purposes they are intended to serve, by preparing the means of ready reference to the whole of them.

As to the different public Libraries in this Country and abroad, their existing and obtainable Catalogues should be all procured ; and, in the absence of a better inventory, their entries might stand in the room of inventorial entries, to be all indexed as heretofore stated.

UNIVERSAL CATALOGUE.

Certainly it would be far preferable if a regular inventory could be obtained as it can be from the Library of the British Museum. When the whole question is reduced to a mere transcript of the title-pages, an UNIVERSAL CATALOGUE not merely of the books existing in our National Library, but of all the books, so far known, that have ever been printed in any language in this Country and abroad, might be easily undertaken, if England, France, Germany and Italy, would combine. There can be little doubt but that the whole civilized world would rejoice to assist in the noble undertaking.

The whole world would thus be converted into a single Library, as it were ;—all its intellectual contents inventoried :—all these inventories incorporated into one UNIVERSAL INDEX, which would then be the universal literary guide to the mental treasury of and for all mankind.

The idea of an UNIVERSAL CATALOGUE is not a new one. It has long since become familiar to many minds ; and this constitutes its greatest value. The Author of a pamphlet entitled "*Exposé succinct d'un nouveau système d'organisation des Bibliothèques publiques, par un Bibliothécaire. Montpellier 1815*" recommends an Universal Bibliography. The Athenæum for 1850 has many columns in support of an Universal Catalogue. In 1854 before the House of Commons Lord Seymour wished the different public libraries would combine to print an universal Catalogue. The Committee on public Libraries advised that there should be a Catalogue of Catalogues, comprising the books of all the public Libraries. In America the Librarian of the Smithsonian Institution has been instructed to make a collection of the Catalogues of all the important Libraries in the United States, and to compile from them one general Index to all the collections of the Country.

It should be for mighty England to embrace the Literature of the world. It would be the noblest Monument of the Civilization of the Age, and the noblest present which this Great Nation could offer to the world.

We cannot better conclude than by quoting a passage from the Athenæum: "A Catalogue of the contents of a local Library is a work which might have passed when

Men divided by the narrow brook
Abhor'd each other—

but unworthy of an Age and a People who, in the Exhibition of 1851 have held out the hand of fellowship to the whole world and acknowledged the brotherhood of nations."

THE END.

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